

From: Brown Pete F NSSC  
Sent: Monday, April 15, 2002 9:13 AM  
To: #NSSC ALL HANDS ONSITE  
Subject: All Hands #361: Update on Mold Problems and Remediation in our WNY Buildings

Folks,

I'd like to update you on the current status of mold problems and our actions to address them, including status of our remediation efforts.

Mold has been identified in several localized areas in Buildings 104, 176 and 197. The areas identified are in the process of remediation and we are working with NDW and NAVFAC to correct the situations that permitted the moisture incursion in the first place. Mold is not an uncommon problem and is associated with the presence of moisture. So to deal with the problem completely, we are addressing both the source of the moisture as well as the elimination of the mold either by cleaning or removal. As you might expect, this causes us to deal with a number of government organizations and contractors as we identify the original source of the moisture and the remediation of any resulting mold.

There is not a single set of regulations, rules or even industry guidelines that clearly define mold remediation procedures. The Environmental Protection Agency and the New York City Department of Health have both posted information on mold remediation in commercial buildings. These guidelines can be found at <<http://www.epa.gov/iaq/molds/index.html>> and <<http://nyc.gov/html/doh/html/epi/moldrpt1.html>>. There is also general information about mold at these sites. Our response to date has been consistent with or exceeded these guidelines. NAVSEA continues to work with NDW and appropriate Navy activities to respond quickly to properly abate and remediate areas where mold has been found or is suspected.

Mold occurs as a result of a number of sources and is one of the more common issues that arise with respect to indoor air quality. NDW is in the process of developing indoor air quality procedures for handling mold as part of their indoor air quality program. NAVSEA will have representation and input to this effort. Until the NDW program is developed and implemented, NAVSEA is working with NAVFAC to address the problem on a case-by-case basis, following these general guidelines.

- \* If you observe mold, please call 1-HELP or the SEA 09A OSH Office and report the location.
- \* SEA 09A, in coordination with NAVFAC, will evaluate the area and determine if sampling is necessary, prior to cleaning or remediation, and the appropriate remediation response.
- \* SEA 09A, in coordination with NAVFAC, will evaluate the source of moisture contributing to the mold growth and develop a response to prevent return of the mold.
- \* Depending on the specific area where the mold is found and the amount of mold, separate containment may be required prior to or after remediation/removal. SEA 09A will work with the Administrative Officer or other designated individual for the work group to advise them of the need for containment, the remediation plans and the results of any samples that may be taken.
- \* If anyone observes any building materials such as carpet, walls or ceiling tiles that are wet or water stained please notify 1-HELP or the SEA 09A OSH Office and report the location.

The following is general information on mold, some of which was also provided in the last all hands on this topic on 17 March.

Molds can be found almost anywhere and there are many types of mold. They grow on virtually any substance if moisture is present. There is no practical way to eliminate all molds and mold spores in the indoor environment. Molds found in buildings usually do not cause illness among healthy individuals. However, molds may cause allergy-type symptoms among exposed persons.

Samples taken of the mold in our building have shown the presence of a mold called *Stachybotrys* in some locations. This particular mold has recently received much media attention, however neither the EPA guidelines nor the New York City Department of Health guidelines recommend that this mold be treated as uniquely toxic. Investigations into the matter by the Center For Disease Control/ National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (CDC/NIOSH) have resulted in the conclusion that there is no definitive link between *stachybotrys* exposure and any unusual illness. Although there are isolated case reports of people suffering from various ailments supposedly linked to *stachybotrys*, the supporting evidence is inconclusive.

We believe it's important to address any mold problems that we encounter and we will continue to do so. We use the services of Navy Occupational Health Physicians to advise us on how to proceed and to set up appointments for individuals who may wish to have specific concerns addressed. You may contact the SEA 09A OSH Office by phone at 202-781-4225, by e-mail at [safety09aoshnssc@navsea.navy.mil](mailto:safety09aoshnssc@navsea.navy.mil) or visit us in Building 197, Room 1W1602 for more information.

We will keep you informed of the efforts to complete the remediation work and our efforts to ensure that we provide a safe and healthful work environment for all of us.

Pete Brown  
Executive Director